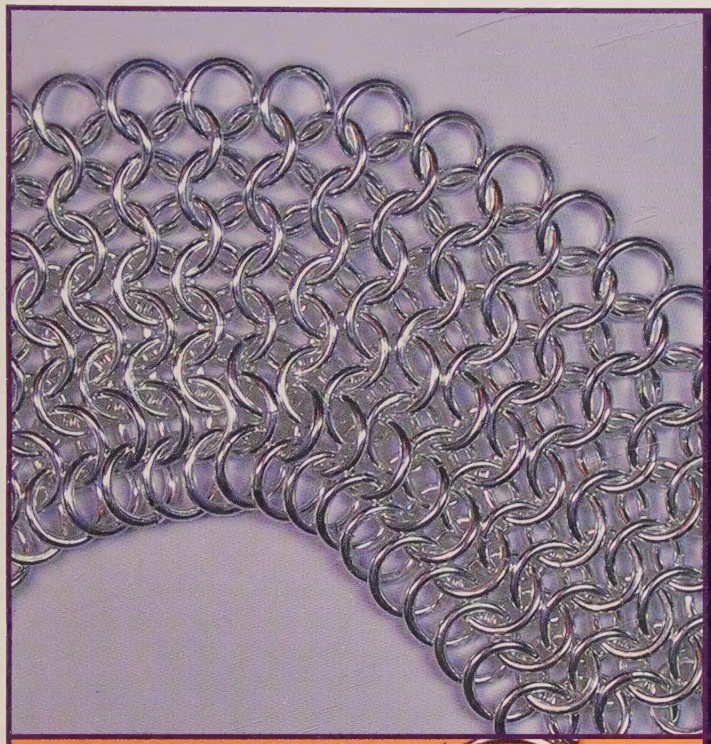
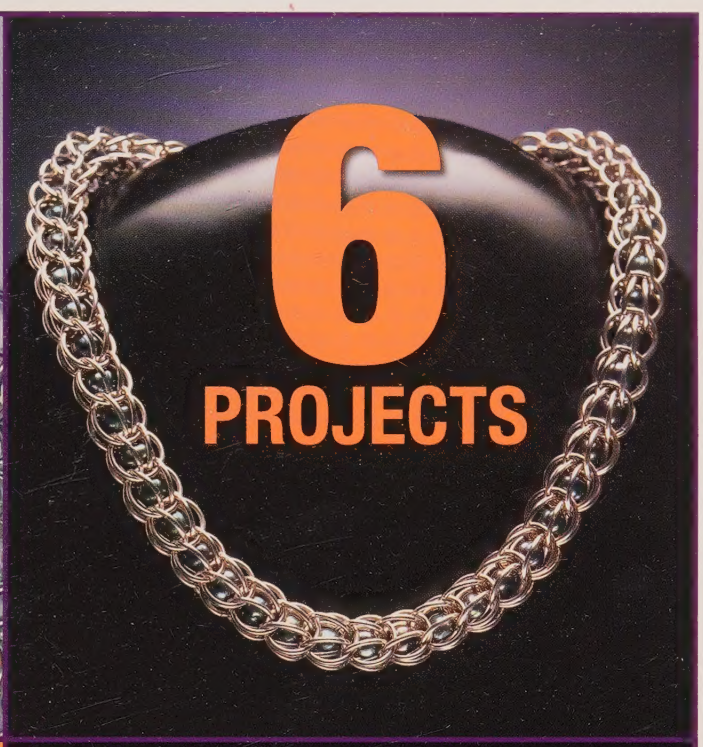
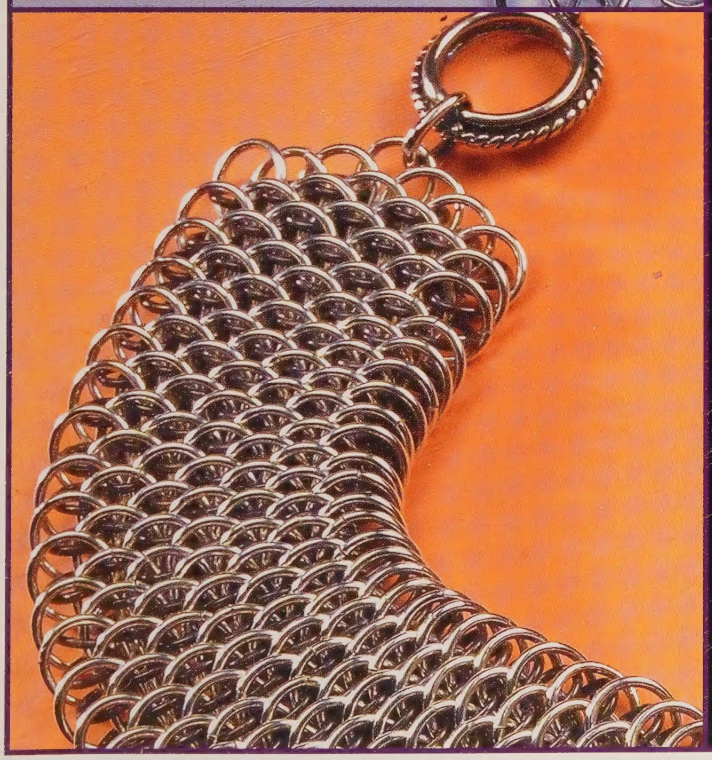
BEAD &BUTTON PRODUCTS
Easy-Does-It Series

Easy Chain Mail







EASY-DOES-IT Series

Easy Chain Mail

Chain mail jewelry is hotter than ever, but the complicated-looking patterns intimidate many beginners. Never fear! The step-by-step photos and easy-to-follow directions in *Easy Chain Mail* lead you through each pattern link-by-link, making it easy for anyone to learn this ancient art form. Chain mail artist Anne E. Mitchell's beautiful designs include traditional patterns and fun variations, from airy chains to dense meshes. Need your beads? Don't worry – we've included two projects, "Beyond Chain" (p. 12) and "Foxtail Pearl Float" (p. 16), that incorporate the color and sparkle of crystals and pearls.

Chain mail requires only one technique: the ability to open and close jump rings. Once you can close your jump rings so that they form seamless circles – see our Basics section (p. 19) for guidelines – you can create any of the projects in this book. All you need is two pairs of pliers and a pile of loose jump rings, and you're on your way to creating beautiful, sophisticated jewelry. The hard part will be convincing people you made it yourself!

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Published by Kalmbach Publishing Co., 21027 Crossroads Circle, Waukesha, WI 53186.

Printed in the United States of America

12 11 10 09 08 2 3 4 5 6

Visit our Web site at www.kalmbach.com/books

ISBN: 978-0-89024-715-0

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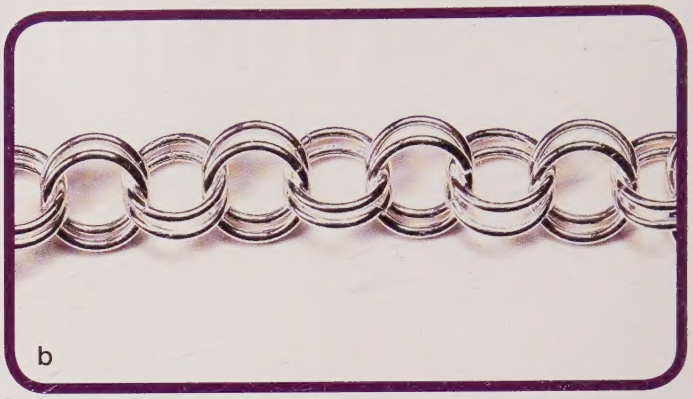
Ancient Links

Known as ancient or Italian link, this delicate-looking chain mail pattern is a very easy technique to learn. You're sure to fall in love with the flowing links of this necklace and bracelet set.

a


b

c

d

MATERIALS

all projects

- **4** 4mm jump rings
- two-strand silver clasp (pacificsilverworks.com)
- **2** pairs chainnose pliers or chainnose and bentnose pliers

bracelet

- 1.5 troy oz. (47g) sterling silver jump rings, 6.5mm inside diameter, 18-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code SS)

necklace

- 3.5 or 4 troy oz. (109 or 124g) sterling silver jump rings, 6.5mm inside diameter, 18-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code SS)

anklet

- 2.5 troy oz. (78g) sterling silver jump rings, 6.5mm inside diameter, 18-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code SS)
- silver charms

Bracelet

[1] For a 7¾-in. bracelet, start with 30 closed jump rings and 28 open jump rings (see Basics, p. 19).

[2] Connect pairs of closed jump rings with pairs of open jump rings (**photo a**) until you have connected all 58 rings. This is a basic 2+2+2 chain (**photo b**).

[3] Repeat steps 1–2 for a second chain.

[4] Open 30 jump rings.

[5] Starting at one end of the first chain, attach two jump rings to the first pair of rings and close the rings. Skip the next pair of rings and add two jump rings, one on each side, to the third pair (**photo c**).

[6] Continue adding two jump rings, one on each side, to every other pair of rings on the chain.

[7] Repeat steps 4–6 for the second chain.

[8] Open a 4mm jump ring and attach a clasp loop to the end pair of rings between the two floating rings on one chain (**photo d**). Close the ring. Repeat with the second chain and the clasp's second loop. Connect the other ends of the chains to the remaining clasp half.

Necklace

[1] For a 17½-in. (44cm) necklace, start with 68 closed jump rings and 64 open jump rings.

[2] Make a 2+2+2 chain, as in step 2 of the bracelet, until all the jump rings from step 1 have been used.

[3] Open 68 jump rings and attach two, one on each side, to every other link of the necklace, as in step 5 of the bracelet.

[4] Make a second chain to match the first.

[5] Open a 4mm jump ring and attach the end pair of jump rings to one of the loops on a two-strand clasp. Close the ring. Repeat with the second chain and the clasp's second loop. Connect the other ends of the chains to the remaining clasp half.

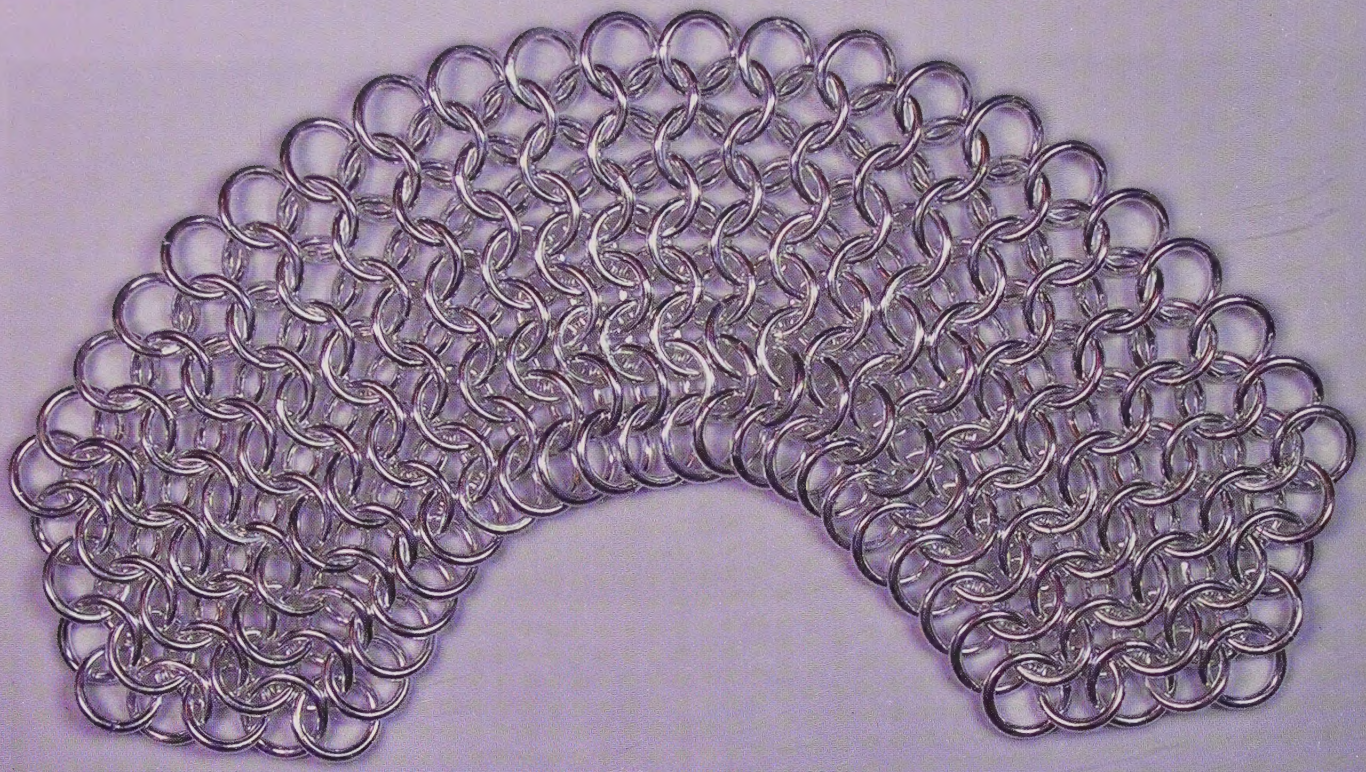
Anklet

To make the anklet variation pictured above, make a single chain (steps 1–3 and 5–7 of the bracelet) 9½ in. (24cm) long and attach a large lobster claw clasp with a 4mm jump ring.

Add silver charms on the floating rings on one side of the chain for an anklet that dances around your leg with every step.

WEIGHING SILVER

Troy weight is an ancient system of measuring gemstones and precious metals. It is derived from the troy system, which has been in use in various forms since medieval times. The name comes from the city of Troyes in France, a key trading city in the Middle Ages. One troy ounce equals 31.10g. (By comparison, a standard ounce weighs 28.35g.)



Celtic Chain

Create a lacy, flat mesh using a basic European four-in-one pattern. The intricate pattern is easy to achieve once you learn how to stabilize your work. A tapered finish makes it easy to add the clasp of your choice.

MATERIALS

- 2 troy oz. (62g) sterling silver jump rings, 5.5mm inside diameter, 16-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code RR)
- clasp
- 2 pairs chainnose pliers or chainnose and bentnose pliers
- T-pins
- padded work surface

Bracelet body

[1] For a 7½-in. (19cm) bracelet, start with 110 closed and 88 open jump rings (see Basics, p. 19). Try to make the seam on the closed rings as invisible as possible.

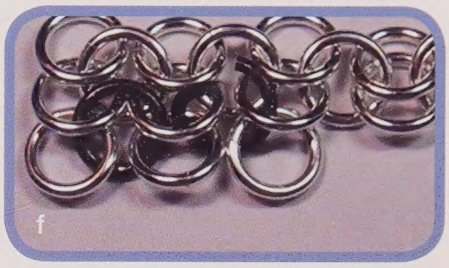
[2] Create a chain consisting of five sets of double rings connected by four single rings (**photo a**). The single rings are blackened in the photos.

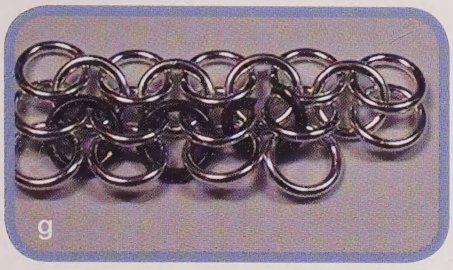
[3] Lay out the length of chain and arrange the rings so the single rings are pointing up and away and the sets of double rings are pointing down and towards the padded work surface, as shown in **photo b**. Secure the chain to the work surface with T-pins to stabilize the chain and maintain the pattern as links are added. Working from left to right, number the lower row of rings 1 through 5.

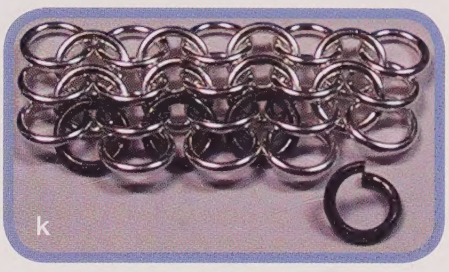
[4] Put two closed rings onto a single open ring (**photo c**). Place the open ring under rings 1 and 2 of the lower row (**photo d**). The orientation of the two closed rings is important: The left side of the open ring needs to grab ring 1, and the right side of the open ring will grab ring 2. Close the jump ring.

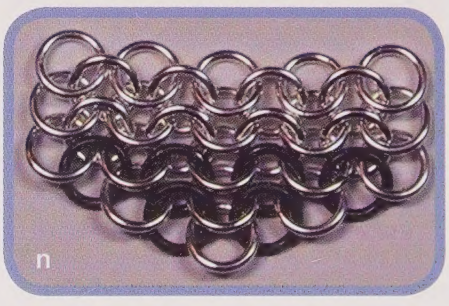
[5] Place a single closed ring onto an open ring (**photo e**).

[6] The left side of the new open ring will come underneath the new lower ring and underneath ring 2. The right side of the open ring will come underneath the single ring 3 (**photo f**). The ring must also grab the two adjacent rings from the previous row, as in step 4. Close the rings.









[7] Repeat steps 5 and 6, attaching the open ring to rings 3 and 4 (**photo g**).
[8] Repeat step 6, attaching the open ring to rings 4 and 5 (**photo h**).
[9] Repeat steps 3–8 until you have completed 22 rows of chain.

Tapered ends and clasp

[1] Repeat step 4 of "Bracelet body," but instead of placing two closed rings on an open ring, place one closed ring on an open ring and keep it to the right side of the open ring (**photo i**).
[2] Continue across as shown in **photo j**. Don't place any closed rings onto the open ring being attached to rings 4 and 5 (**photo k**).
[3] Rings 1 and 5 have now been eliminated. Repeat the previous steps to finish off the final row (**photos l, m,** and **n**).
[4] Once one end of the tapering is complete, turn the bracelet over to work on the opposite end. If the bracelet is not turned over, the jump rings will be flipped in the wrong direction.
[5] Open a jump ring, attach a clasp half to an end ring, and close the jump ring. Repeat on the other end.

Mermaid Mesh

Three-layer chain mail creates a slinky bracelet with an intricate pattern. Dense and heavy, this mesh feels great to wear.

MATERIALS

- 2 troy oz. (62g) sterling silver jump rings, 6.5mm inside diameter, 18-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code SS)
- 1 troy oz. (31g) sterling silver jump rings, 4mm inside diameter, 19-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, code KK)
- toggle clasp
- liver of sulphur
- padded work surface
- 2 pairs chainnose pliers or chainnose and bentnose pliers

Before you begin, antique the 4mm jump rings in a solution of liver of sulphur (following the manufacturer's directions). Darkening the smaller rings gives the pattern its distinctive 3-D look.

Bracelet body

[1] Open four large silver rings (see Basics, p. 19) and connect them to three small blackened rings (**photo a**). Close the rings.

[2] Close three and open four large silver rings. Place one closed silver ring over the left black ring. Place the second closed silver ring over the middle black ring (**photo b**). Secure them in position with an open silver ring through the left and middle blackened rings (**photo c**). Make sure the silver ring grabs only the two black rings. This new ring sits on top of the second layer of silver rings. Close all the rings.

[3] Place the third closed ring over the right black ring and lock it in place with an open silver ring. This silver ring grabs the middle and right black rings (**photo d**).

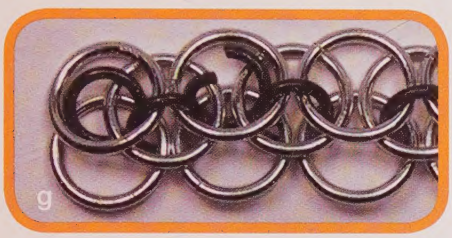
[4] Attach one open silver ring to the far left black ring and one to the far right black ring (**photo e**) and close the rings.

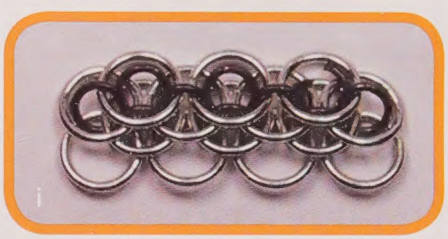
[5] Open four black rings. Starting on the left, take one black ring and grab the silver ring sandwiched beneath the top and bottom row of silver rings (**photo f**). Close the ring.

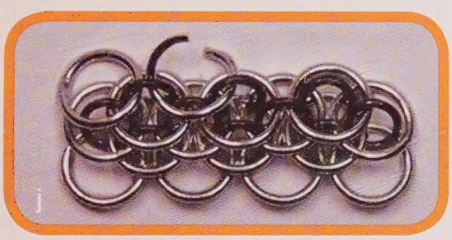
Use the second black ring to grab the two silver rings sandwiched beneath the top and bottom row of silver rings and close the ring (**photo g**). Use the third black ring to grab the next pair of silver rings and close the ring. Use the fourth black ring to do the same with the ring on the far right. Place these black rings above or in front of the previous row of black rings.

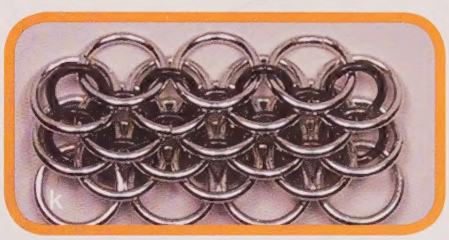
[6] Open three silver rings. Place one silver ring through the first and second black rings added in step 5 and close the ring (**photo h**). Place the next silver ring through the second and third black rings and the third silver ring through the third and fourth black rings and close the rings.

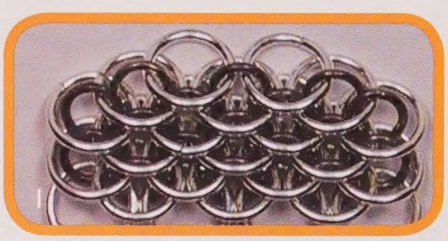
[7] Open three black rings. Connect them to silver rings as in step 5, but this time each black ring grabs two rings from the silver layer below (**photo i**). Make sure the black rings are above or in front of the previous row of black rings.











[8] Open four silver rings. Place one silver ring through the left black ring and close it. Place the second silver ring through the left and middle black rings and close it. Place the third silver ring through the middle and right black rings and close it. Place the fourth silver ring around the right black ring and close it (photo j).

[9] Repeat step 5 to complete the pattern.

[10] Repeat steps 6-9 until you reach the desired length for the main bracelet section. Allow about 1½ in. (38mm) for tapering the bracelet and adding the clasp.

Tapered ends and clasp

[1] To taper one end, open three silver rings. Attach the rings as in step 6 (photo k).

[2] Open three black rings. Attach the black rings to the three silver rings as in step 7 and close the rings.

[3] Open two silver rings. Attach one between the first and second black rings and the other between the center and end black ring as in step 8 and close the rings (photo l).

[4] Open two black rings. Attach each one to two silver rings in the layer below as in step 7 and close them.

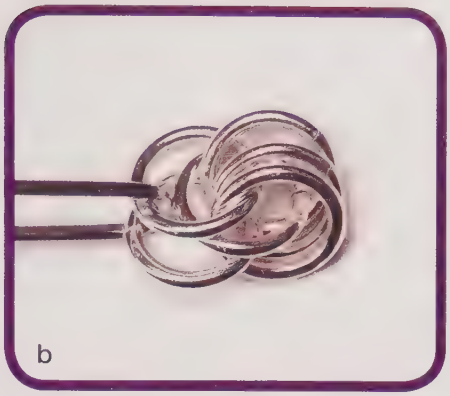
[5] Attach one silver ring to the two black rings (photo m).

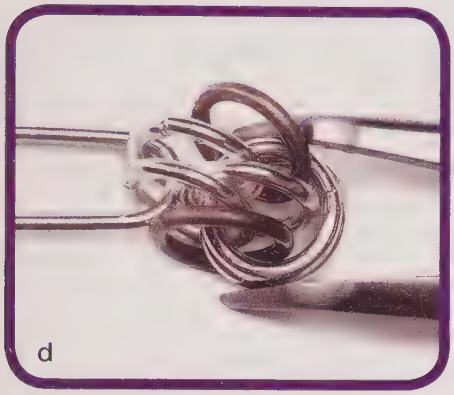
[6] Attach half of a clasp to the end ring (photo n). Repeat on the other end of the bracelet.

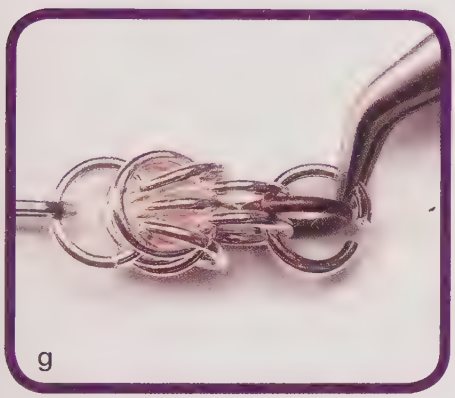
EDITOR'S NOTE:
Although this is not a difficult mesh to create, it requires correct proportions between the ring diameter and the wire gauge to make the pattern flow. If you vary from the materials listed here, you'll need to experiment to find other jump ring sizes and gauges that will allow this mesh to work up easily and move freely.

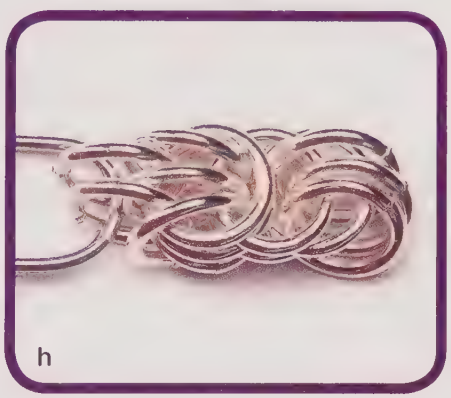
Tryzantine Bracelet

This bracelet is a variation of the classic Byzantine link pattern. The density and weight of this chain make for a great bracelet or necklace. Admirers will wonder how you constructed such an intricate design.









In the process photos above, blackened jump rings are used to distinguish which rings to add in each step.

[1] Open three jump rings (see Basics, p. 19) and connect them to three closed jump rings (**photo a**).
[2] Slide the outer two jump rings of one link section onto a paper clip (**photo b**). Pay attention to the orientation of the paper clip in the photos as you work.
[3] Connect two jump rings to the end three-ring link (**photo c**).
[4] Slide the left jump ring to the left so it rests against the jump rings on the paper clip. Repeat on the right with the right jump ring (**photo d**).
[5] Turn the entire assembly on its side (**photo e**).
[6] Open two jump rings and connect them to the center three rings, sandwiching them between the three end rings (**photo f**).
[7] Place a closed jump ring between the two rings at the end of the chain. This ring will be connected in the following step.
[8] Working with one jump ring at a time (**photo g**), connect three jump rings through the two end rings and the closed center ring added in the previous step (**photo h**).
[9] Connect two jump rings to the end three-ring link and slide them to the sides as before (**photo i**).

MATERIALS

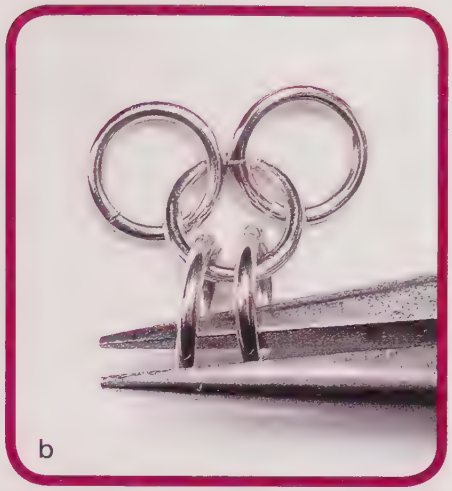
- 1.5 troy oz. (47g) sterling silver jump rings, 6.5mm inside diameter, 16-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code TT)
- lobster claw clasp
- paper clip
- 2 pairs chainnose pliers or chainnose and bentnose pliers

[10] Repeat steps 5–9 until the chain is the desired length.
[11] Attach a lobster claw clasp to the end two-ring link with a jump ring. Connect a jump ring to the two-ring link at the other end of the chain.

Beyond Chain

Incorporate a strand of crystals in a chain mail bracelet and choker.

a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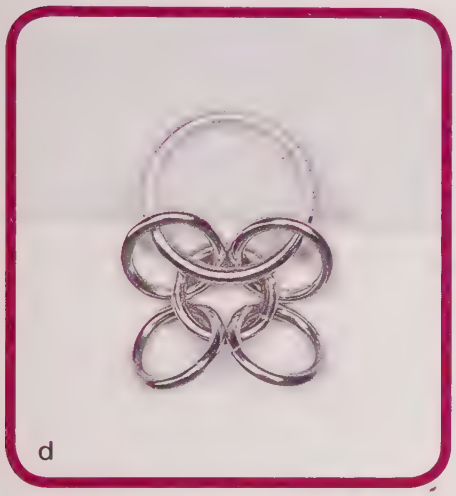
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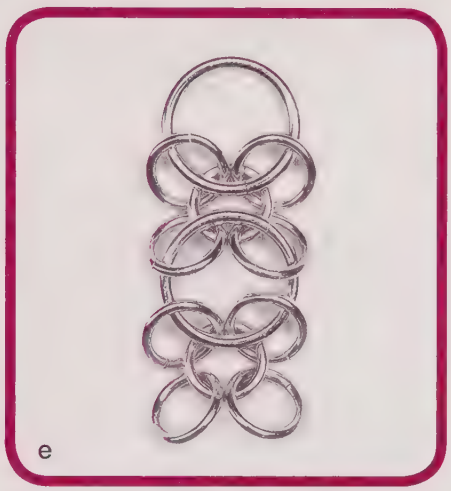

e

Bracelet

Connect the jump rings

[1] For an 8-in. (20cm) bracelet, close 44 and open 11 5.5mm jump rings (Basics, p. 19).

[2] Slide four closed 5.5mm rings on an open 5.5mm ring (**photo a**). Close the jump ring. Repeat with the remaining rings to make 11 four-in-one sets.

[3] Open 12 10mm rings.

[4] Separate the four rings in a four-in-one set into two pairs. Flip one pair of rings so they are side by side on your work surface (**photo b**). Slide a 10mm ring through the two side-by-side 5.5mm rings (**photo c**).

[5] Close the 10mm ring, and tape it to your work surface so the rings are easier to position. Flip the other pair of 5.5mm rings toward each other. The inside edge of the rings will touch, and the rings will not lie flat (**photo d**).

[6] Repeat step 4. Connect the new 10mm ring to the available pair of 5.5mm rings on the previous four-in-one set. Remove the tape, close the 10mm ring, and flip the next pair of 5.5mm rings as in step 5 (**photo e**).

MATERIALS

both projects

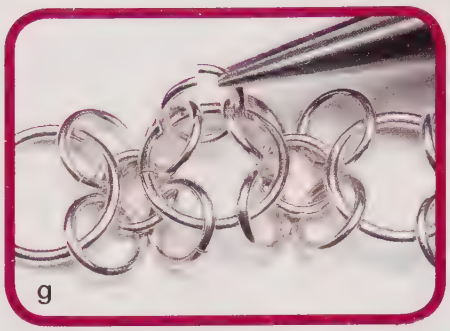
- lobster claw clasp
- **2** crimp beads
- flexible beading wire, .014
- **2** pairs chainnose pliers or chainnose and bentnose pliers
- crimping pliers
- wire cutters

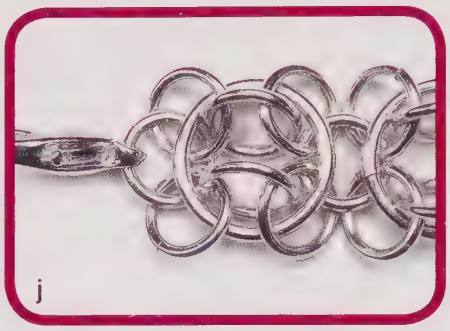
bracelet

- **11** 6mm round crystals
- ½ troy oz. (16g) sterling silver jump rings, 10mm inside diameter, 15-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code WW)
- ¾ troy oz. (24g) sterling silver jump rings, 5.5mm inside diameter, 17-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code QQ)

choker

- **22** 6mm round crystals
- 1 troy oz. (32g) sterling silver jump rings, 10mm inside diameter, 15-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code WW)
- 1½ troy oz. (48g) sterling silver jump rings, 5.5mm inside diameter, 17-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code QQ)





[7] Continue connecting four-in-one sets with the remaining 10mm rings from step 3 (**photo f**). You won't need to secure the chain to your work surface anymore. Connect the last 10mm ring to the end pair of 5.5mm rings.

[8] Open 20 5.5mm rings.

[9] Turn your work so it is horizontal. Starting at the second 10mm jump ring on the chain, slide a 5.5mm ring through the top two 5.5mm rings within the 10mm ring (**photo g**). Close the 5.5mm ring, and repeat with the bottom two 5.5mm rings (**photo h**). Continue in this pattern along the length of the chain.

[10] Close one 5.5mm ring, and open 10 5.5mm rings.

[11] Working on one end of the chain, connect two 5.5mm rings to the end 10mm ring. Flip the rings as shown, and connect the lobster claw clasp to the two 5.5mm rings using a third ring (**photo i**). Connect two rings to the 5.5mm rings within the end 10mm ring, as in step 9 (**photo j**).

[12] Repeat step 11 at the other end of the chain, substituting the closed 5.5mm ring for the lobster claw clasp.

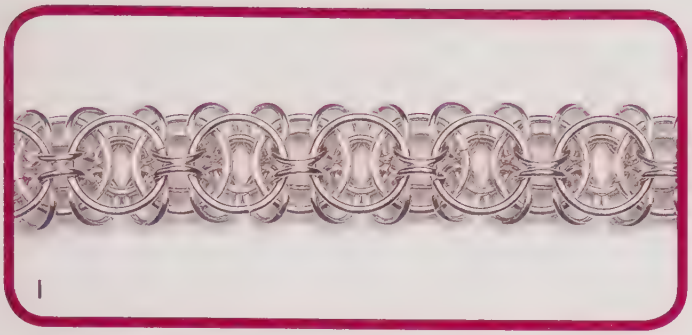
[13] Open 11 10mm rings.

[14] Starting at one end, slide a 10mm ring through the vertical 5.5mm rings in the centers of the first two 10mm rings (**photo k**). Close the ring. Repeat along the chain (**photo l**). **Photo m** shows the side view of the finished chain.

String the crystals

[1] Cut a 1-ft. (30cm) length of beading wire. String a crimp bead. Slide the end of the wire between the two vertical 5.5mm rings and up through the center of the 10mm ring at one end of the chain. Bring the wire back through the crimp bead. Position the crimp bead next to the 10mm ring, make a folded crimp (Basics), and trim the wire tail as close to the crimp bead as possible (**photo n**).

[2] String a crystal, and bring the end of the wire under the 10mm ring and between the next two vertical 5.5mm rings. Bring the end of the wire out through the center of the next 10mm ring (**photo o**).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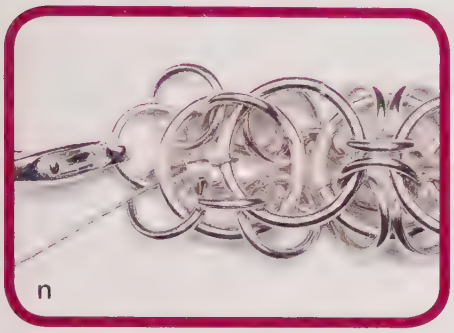
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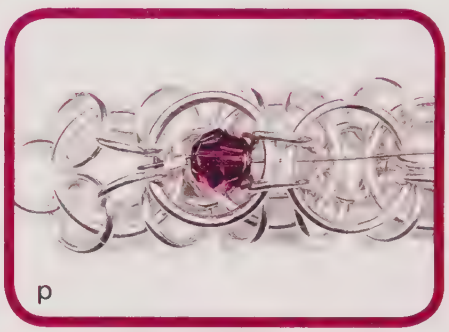

p

[3] Pull on the wire, popping the crystal into the center of the first 10mm ring (photo p).

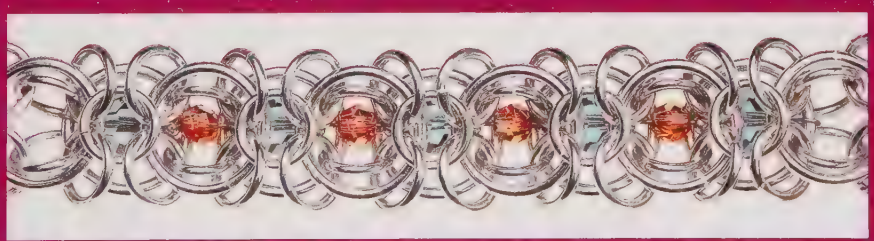
[4] Repeat steps 2 and 3 along the chain. String a crimp bead after the last crystal, and crimp the wire to the other end as in step 1.

Choker

Follow the directions for the bracelet, using the number of jump rings necessary to reach your desired length. Use 22 crystals for a 14-in. (20cm) choker. When stringing the crystals, use a length of flexible beading wire 4 in. (10cm) longer than the chain length.

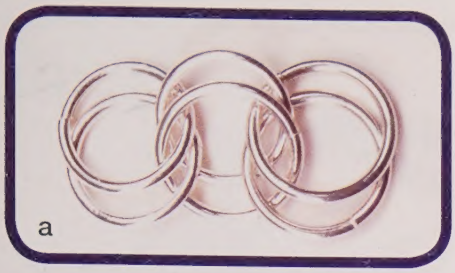
EDITOR'S NOTE:

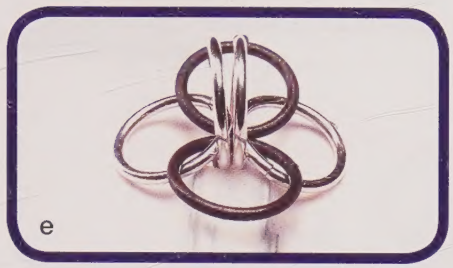
To keep the crystals from sliding inside the chain and to hide the beading wire between the crystals, adapt the instructions as follows: Work steps 1–3 of "String the crystals." String a 2mm round silver bead, a 4mm crystal, and a 2mm bead. Position the crystal under the two 5.5mm jump rings. Repeat this pattern, ending with a crimp bead instead of a 2mm bead. The photos below show the crystals' placement on the top, side, and bottom of the chain.

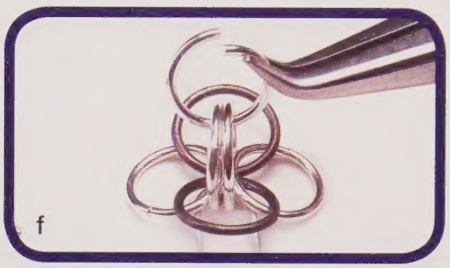


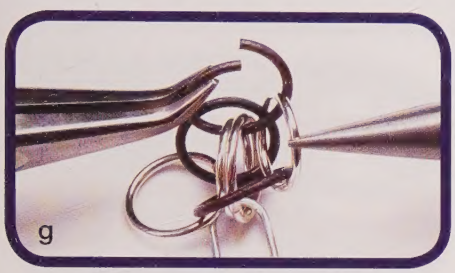
Foxtail Pearl Float

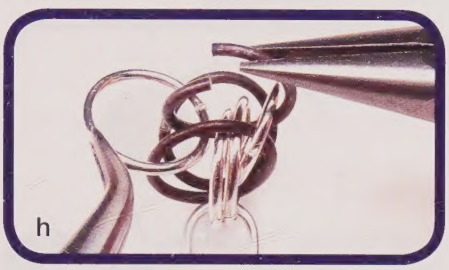
Add drama to the medieval allure of linked rings by caging pearls or glass beads in a ropelike chain called a Full Persian. The dense weave of this intricate chain creates chambers that just beg to be filled.

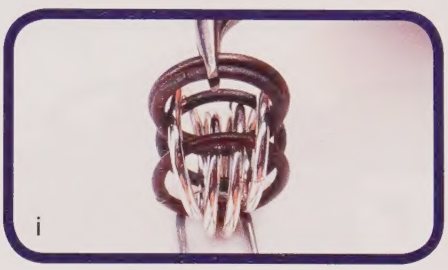












For clarity, the instructions refer to the positions of the jump rings as north (away from you), south (toward you), east (to your right), and west (to your left).

Assemble the chain

[1] Close four 10mm jump rings. Open the remaining 10mm rings (see Basics, p. 19).

[2] Connect the two pairs of closed jump rings with a pair of open jump rings for a 2+2+2 section of chain (**photo a**).

[3] Attach a paper clip to one end of the chain as shown in **photo b**. Tape it to your work surface so it lies vertically. The two rings attached to the paper clip are rings 1 and 2, the two middle rings are rings 3 and 4, and the top rings are 5 and 6.

[4] Hold rings 5 and 6 with pliers and drop ring 6 to the east of the chain (**photo c**). Then drop ring 5 to the west (**photo d**).

[5] Separate rings 3 and 4, bringing one ring to the north and one to the south (**photo e**). Arrange the rings so they are positioned as shown. Rings 3 and 4 (north and south) should be slightly raised and rings 5 and 6 (east and west) should be pointing down toward your work surface.

[6] Connect an open jump ring to rings 1 and 2 (**photo f**). Don't close the ring.

[7] Hold the open jump ring (ring 7) with one pair of pliers, grasp ring 6 (on the east) with a second pair of pliers, and place it onto the open ring (**photo g**).

[8] Continue holding ring 7. Grasp ring 5 (on the west) with the second pair of pliers and place it onto the open ring (**photo h**). Close the jump ring.

[9] Connect a jump ring to rings 5, 1, 2, and 6 so it sits next to ring 7 (**photo i**). This is ring 8.

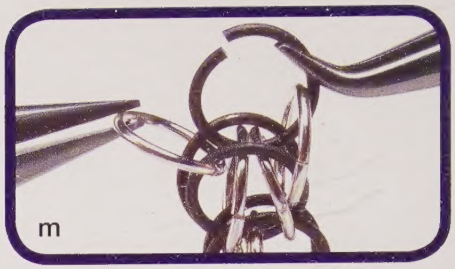
[10] Connect two rings (9 and 10) to rings 7 and 8 (**photo j**).

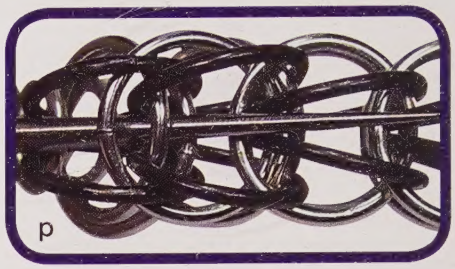
[11] Bring ring 10 to the east and grab rings 7 and 8 with your pliers, so ring 9 falls to the west of the chain (**photo k**).

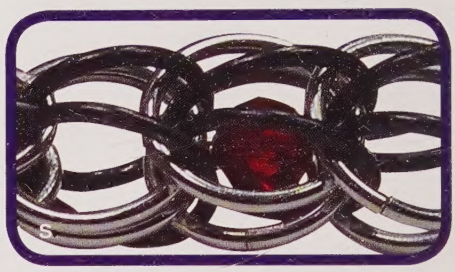
EDITOR'S NOTE:
When you tape the paper clip to your work surface, tape the top of it just below the rings. This will hold the rings in place and keep the chain from shifting as you work.

MATERIALS

- 16-in. (40cm) strand 4–5mm pearls or beads
- 3 troy oz. (64g) sterling silver jump rings, 10mm inside diameter, 16-gauge wire (annemitchell.net, style code VV)
- 6 sterling silver jump rings, 5mm inside diameter, 18-gauge wire (Beadissimo, style code OO)
- lobster claw clasp
- 2 crimp beads
- flexible beading wire, .014–.015
- paper clip
- beading awl
- 2 pairs chainnose pliers or chainnose and bentnose pliers
- crimping pliers
- wire cutters







[12] Separate rings 7 and 8, as you did rings 3 and 4 in step 5, and slide a jump ring (ring 11) onto rings 5 and 6, which will pop up slightly on the sides of rings 1 and 2 (photo l). Don't close the jump ring.

[13] Bring ring 10 up from the right of the chain and slide it onto ring 11. Then bring ring 9 up from the left of the chain and slide it onto ring 11 (photo m). Close the jump ring.

[14] Connect ring 12, as you did ring 8 in step 9, through the four center rings so it sits next to ring 11 (photo n).

[15] Now that the pattern is established you can remove the chain from the paper clip. Repeat steps 10–14 until you reach the desired length.

[16] Attach three 5mm jump rings to each end of the chain as shown in photo o.

[17] Attach a lobster claw clasp to the 5mm jump ring at one end of the chain.

String the beads

[1] Crimp a crimp bead (Basics) at the end of a 24-in. (61cm) piece of flexible beading wire and trim the wire as close to the crimp as possible. When crimping one strand, it helps to squeeze the crimp with chainnose pliers after crimping to make sure it is secure.

[2] Position the awl through the center intersection of the first and second chambers so it intersects all four rings (photo p).

[3] Using the awl as a guide, slide the uncrimped end of the beading wire through the center of these rings. Pull the wire about halfway through, lay the chain down on your work surface, and string a bead on the wire. Don't let the bead go into the chain chamber.

[4] Carefully pick up the chain and reposition the awl through where the the second and third chambers intersect (photo q).

[5] Feed a few inches of the wire through the center of these jump rings, using the awl as a guide. Place the chain on your work surface, remove the awl, and gently pull on each end of the wire (photo r) and pop the bead into the chamber (photo s).

[6] String a bead on the wire and repeat steps 4–5. Repeat until you reach the second-to-last chamber. The first and last chambers of the chain remain empty.

[7] After all the beads are in place, pull the wire all the way through the chain and form the chain into a circle. Use a fine-point marker to mark the wire just past the intersection of the last two chambers.

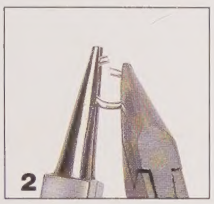
[8] Pull on the unfinished end of the wire so the chain collapses on itself and exposes the mark you just made. String a crimp over the mark and crimp it in place.

[9] Trim the excess wire. When you straighten the chain, the crimps will tuck inside the end chambers.

Basics

Opening and closing loops or jump rings

1 Hold the loop or jump ring with two pairs of chainnose pliers, as shown.
2 To open the loop or jump ring, bring one pair of pliers toward you and push the other pair away. String materials on the open loop or jump ring. Reverse the steps to close the open loop or jump ring.



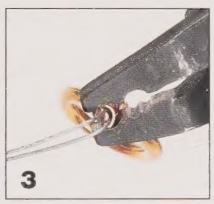
Flattened crimp

1 Hold the crimp using the tip of your chainnose pliers. Squeeze the pliers firmly to flatten the crimp.
2 Tug the wire to make sure the crimp has a solid grip. If the wire slides, repeat the steps with a new crimp.

Folded crimp

1 Position the crimp bead in the notch closest to the crimping pliers' handle.
2 Separate the wires and firmly squeeze the crimp.

3 Move the crimp into the notch at the pliers' tip and hold the crimp as shown. Squeeze the crimp bead, folding it in half at the indentation.
4 Test that the folded crimp is secure.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anne E. Mitchell is a jewelry designer and instructor known for beautiful chain mail designs and easy-to-follow techniques. She is also the author of Chain Making Techniques *and* The Low-Tech Bench. *Visit her Web site, annemitchell.net, to see more of her work and view her teaching schedule. Kits, jump rings, and tools are also available for purchase on her site. Contact Anne via e-mail at anne@annemitchell.net.*

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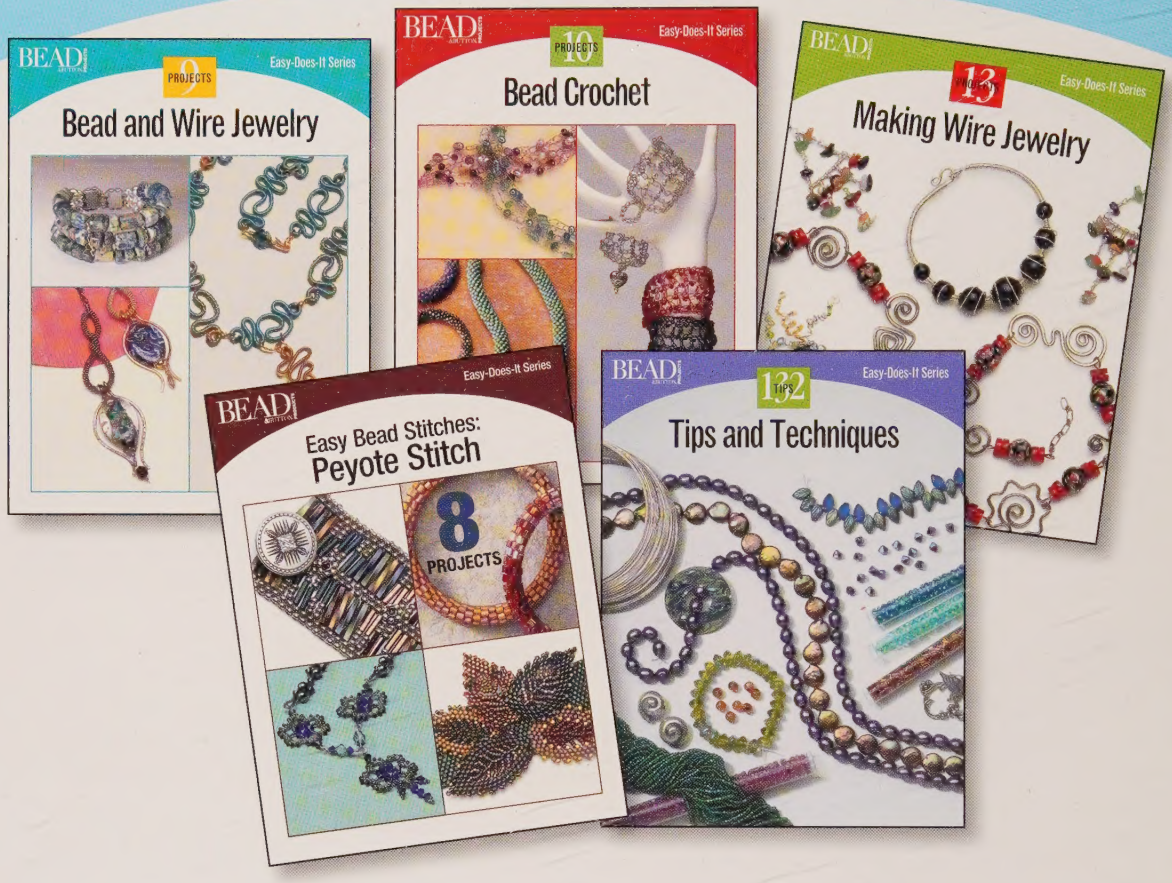

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